

Welcoming speech by Strzhalkovsky V.I., the General Director of MMC Norilsk Nickel, to the International Scientific and Practical Workshop devoted to prevention and management of emergencies in the Arctic region, including environmental emergencies, held under the aegis of the Arctic Council

Dear participants,

Let me greet you on behalf of Norilsk Nickel, a Company with a long history of successful work in this Arctic region.

The Arctic is not a theoretical but a practical matter to us, for the key production operations of MMC Norilsk Nickel are located in the Far North, above the Polar Circle.

Here, in the Taimyr Peninsula, our operations are united in one industrial center that includes production plants, power supply facilities and transport infrastructure. Given the remoteness and isolation of the Norilsk Industrial Region from “the mainland”, MMC Norilsk Nickel has assumed responsibility for securing reliable power supply to the production site and the city”.

We are constantly looking for innovative solutions ensuring the efficient operation of production facilities in the Far North surroundings. In order to avoid any interruptions in the transportation of production supplies to this industrial center, which may be accessed only by water or by air, Norilsk Nickel is now building its own sea fleet of five Arctic-type vessels. Two vessels are already in operation, and in 2009 when the construction of the fleet is finished, the Company will become logistically independent. The availability of the Company’s own fleet will guarantee the reliability of metal delivery to our consumers and the environmental safety of cargo transportation.

One of the long-term goals set out in the Norilsk Nickel’s development strategy consists in enhancing the environmental safety of metal production in line with the environment protection laws. In 2007, the Company’s expenditures in the environment protection measures only at its Russian operations amounted approximately to RUB 9 bln. Further steps were made to diminish air pollution, as provided for by the corresponding Action Plan.

MMC Norilsk Nickel is implementing a large-scale environmental program worth RUB 36 bln. Today the Company maintains working contacts with a number of environmental organizations and operates in close cooperation with Putorana State Biosphere Reserve, which will be further discussed at the workshop session. All participants will have the opportunity to see a unique Putorana plateau.

Operation of MMC Norilsk Nickel proves that Arctic does not mean just problems and challenges; this region opens unique opportunities for development. I am sure that joint efforts of the state and private businesses, as well as experience sharing among all interested parties, will allow our country to develop the potential of these Arctic territories to the maximum extent.

Let me thank the representatives of the Arctic Council, Ministry for Emergency Situations of the Russian Federation, all researches and experts who took part in the workshop preparation and conducting.

I wish you success, fruitful discussions and interesting encounters.